

Attempted Mating Between Male Monarchs



In coastal California, on the sunny days of February and March, when the overwintering concentrations of Monarchs (*Danaus plexippus*) begin to disperse, numerous individuals may be seen in flight around the pine and cypress trees where they settle in Pacific Grove. It appears that the females often leave the area first, and the sex ratio is then strongly skewed to males. Numerous attempts at mating may be noted between males at this time. The picture shown here was taken late in February at Millar's Motel in Pacific Grove, which as an adjacent woodlot frequented by large numbers of Monarchs.

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Editorial *continued*

including competition for the same niche with different kinds of organism. The spectrum of life forms we see today is the result of the interaction of change and extinction. From paleontological evidence the rates of both processes have not been constant, and at times spectacular, e.g., appearance of the vertebrate system and disappearance of the dinosaurs. The advent of acculturated man again accelerated the process, commencing in measurable ways during the past Pleistocene.

It is our position that responsible behavior demands an active stand to halt or circumvent massive inroads on ecosystems and further reduction in numbers of adaptive entities. We particularly urge the members of the Foundation to support activities such as the Xerces Society offers, emphasizing insect conservation, in addition to the more general environmental groups as World Wildlife Fund. Although there is no doubt that "development," by habitat modification, is quite beneficial to the human population immediately, the operation of limits, which must be imposed at *some* point, can only lead to the rational conclusion that further human population growth and "development" will start to depress the standard of life for all mankind in the very near future. We are currently formulating activities for the Lepidoptera Research Foundation to more directly participate in conservation efforts.